

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
REVISED FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

CLEAR LAKE DAM MODIFICATION
SAFETY OF DAMS PROGRAM

Modoc County, California



Prepared By:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Klamath Basin Area Office
Klamath Falls, Oregon

October 26, 2000

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U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Klamath Basin Area Office

FONSI No.: KBAO-FONSI-00-001(Revised)

Recommended: _____ Date: _____
Area Office Environmental Specialist

Approved: _____ Date: _____
Area Manager

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KBAO-F0NSI-00-001 (Revised)

CLEAR LAKE DAM MODIFICATION SAFETY OF DAMS PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) prepared an Final Environmental Assessment (EA) (KBAO-EA-00-001) describing the environmental effects of the proposal to correct the known safety deficiencies of Clear Lake Dam under the Safety of Dams Act (P.L. 95-578, as amended). The EA was prepared to satisfy the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (P.L. 91-190, as amended).

Recent Safety of Dams (SOD) investigations of Clear Lake Dam conducted by Reclamation indicate an unacceptable risk of dam failure under certain conditions. The dam was investigated pursuant to the Safety of Dams Act and Reclamation has determined that the dam does not meet state-of-the-art design standards, such as having a properly designed filter system to prevent piping and/or internal erosion. The risk of failure of the dam, based on piping and internal erosion, provides significant justification to take action to reduce the risk of dam failure. The risk of dam failure increases with rising reservoir elevation. Reclamation recommends that corrective actions be undertaken.

Several structural and non-structural alternatives were considered, but eliminated from detailed study in the EA. Two alternatives for corrective action were evaluated in detail in the EA:

- (1) Proposed Action Alternative - Modify the dam site by constructing a roller-compacted concrete (RCC) embankment structure immediately downstream from the existing embankment structure;
- (2) No Action - take no action to structurally modify Clear Lake Dam and implement a permanent reservoir elevation restriction for Clear Lake.

The environmental effects of the two alternatives considered in detail are described in the EA. This finding incorporates that EA by reference. Impacts on cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, wetland and riparian areas, livestock grazing, Clear Lake National Wildlife Refuge and irrigation use and flood control were described in the EA.

DECISION

Reclamation has selected the Proposed Action Alternative (construct RCC embankment structure) for implementation. Reclamation believes this alternative best corrects the known safety deficiencies of Clear Lake Dam. Reclamation will implement the mitigation measures described in the EA.

FINDING

Reclamation has determined, based upon the impacts described in the EA, that the Proposed Action Alternative does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. An environmental impact statement will not be prepared. The impacts

of the Proposed Action Alternative on the affected resources described in the EA are temporary, localized and short-term. The mitigation measures in the EA, when implemented, ensure that the impacts of the project are insignificant.